

Hawaii MARINE ON POINT

HAWAII MARINE D SECTION

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Photo illustration by Christine Cabalo

Women's History Month honors women in uniform

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Military women and their achievements are being honored aboard Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay, during Women's History Month. Exhibits featuring famous women in history are on display throughout the base as a tribute to this year's theme, "Generations of Women Moving History Forward."

According to Staff Sgt. Vicki Brown, equal opportunity representative, Combat Service Support Group 3, women have made many sacrifices in order to serve. At other commands she's been assigned to, Women's History Month was not observed. She remembers being unaware of the yearly event until she came to K-Bay where it is regularly supported.

Brown said observing a history month is a good way of honoring the contributions of women who have served in the military. Planned events give others a chance to learn more about pioneering females in the military, she said.

During the planning stages for the Women's History Month Luncheon at Anderson Hall, Brown said she learned about women who have achieved equality despite limited opportunities.

This insight came during a luncheon at Fort Shafter in Honolulu. Brown heard about Cathay Williams, an African American soldier who wanted to join the Army. Because women were not allowed to enlist in 1866, she dressed up like a man and enlisted under the name William Cathay, hiding her identity. She served for two years.

Sergeant Adam Anderson, landing support specialist, CSSG-3, said he is just now realizing the impact that women in the military have had on their respective services.

"What surprised me is how early on women were doing things in the military," he said. "During the 1800s and the early 1900s, women were doing what the men were doing."

Anderson is coordinating two fitness events in celebration of Women's History Month: a bench-press competition at K-Bay's Semper Fit Center March 27 and a 5-K run for March 30 aboard Kaneohe Bay.

The sergeant said everyone is welcome to attend and hopes the events generate more awareness of the vital role women play in the military.

Brown said supporting history month through special events is something everyone should take the

time to do.

"There are a lot of activities happening for people to join in," she said. "It's good to have an entire month to do that. People have more of a chance to recognize what women have done for their country."

Brown went on to say that she encourages others to learn from the strength of women who have served in the military.

Brown said she admires the determination of women who were first to be promoted or to be recognized for work. However, her favorite female role model did not serve in the military.

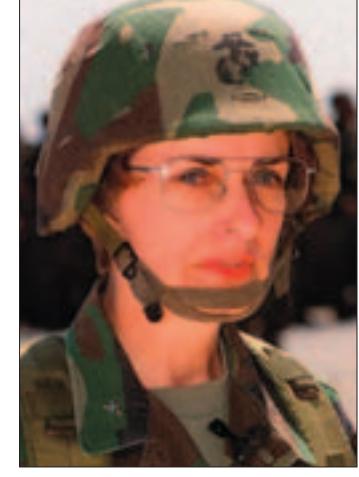
"I really look up to my mother," she said. "She's strong, and I've tried to have that courage too. As a single parent, she raised her children. It takes a lot of strength to do that."

Rear Adm. Grace Hopper U.S. Navy



In 1943, Rear Adm. Grace Hopper joined the Navy and was one of the first female computer programmers. As one of the first mathematicians for the Navy, she worked on Mark I calculator, which was one of the first fully automated computers.

Lt. Gen. Carol A. Mutter U.S. Marine Corps



In 1996, Lieutenant Gen. Carol A. Mutter was the first woman to be promoted to a three-star rank in all of the Armed Forces. Mutter retired in 1999, and currently works with Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services.

Cmdr. Darlene Iskra U.S. Navy



In 1990, Cmdr. Darlene Iskra became the first woman to command a U.S. Navy ship. She served as commanding officer for the salvage ship USS Opportune. She was also one of the first female line officers to graduate from dive school.

Brig. Gen. Maragaret Brewer U.S. Marine Corps



In 1978, Brig. Gen. Maragaret Brewer became the first female in the Marine Corps to be promoted to brigadier general. Brewer received the Legion of Merit for her work in the now disbanded "Women Marines" unit.

2007 Women's History Month activities

Women's History Month is being recognized throughout the month of March with displays and scheduled events aboard Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay. Oversized posters and other types of displays of prominent women in history can be seen in Building 216 as well as other areas on base.

In addition to the displays and discount movie rentals, the following are also scheduled:

Mega Video

The base video rental store is offering a 50 percent discount on its selection of movies that feature women's achievements.

Marine Corps Exchange

Patrons will receive 10 to 25 percent off featured items at the Exchange through Monday.

Bench-Press Challenge

A competition will be held at K-Bay's Semper Fit Center March 27 at 4:30 p.m. Registration is free. To sign up, or for more information, call 257-1636.

5-Kilometer Run

Registration for the March 30 on-base run is free, and prizes will be raffled off during the event. To sign up, or for more information, call 257-1636.

Marquee at The Lodge

The marquee will continue to display information about historic events involving women that transpired throughout history.



Official Marine Corps photo